

THE *esprit* ORCHESTRA

The New World Series
1986-87

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ALEX PAUK
conductor

THE NEW WORLD SERIES
1986/87
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1

MIRAGE (1984) Alex Pauk (Can.)

CONCERTO for Flute R. Murray Schafer (Can.)
and Orchestra (1984)

Soloist - Douglas Stewart

intermission

TRACES OF BECOMING Tomas Dusatko (Can.)
(1986) *

VARIATIONS for Winds, Steve Reich (U.S.)
Strings and Keyboards (1979) **

* World Premiere

** Canadian Premiere

Tonight's concert will be broadcast on **Two New Hours** - CBC Stereo
in Toronto, 94.1 on the FM dial - on Sunday, March 1 at 9:00 p.m.



Jane Mallett Theatre
St. Lawrence Centre

THE ESPRIT ORCHESTRA

The Esprit Orchestra is a 40-piece repertory orchestra based in Toronto, whose goal is to commission, perform and promote new orchestral works by Canadian composers. The orchestra was founded by Alex Pauk in 1983 with the generous assistance of Suncor Inc., the Canada Council, and the National Youth Orchestra of Canada. The orchestra gave two concerts in its first year of operation and in these concerts premiered works by Canadian composers John Rea (Vanishing Points) and John Burke (Alchemies).

The initial two-year phase of The Esprit Orchestra's activities concluded with a performance given as part of the 1984 World Music Days held in Toronto in September 1984 and sponsored by the International Society for Contemporary Music. The programme featured premieres of works by Canadians Brian Cherney (Into the Distant Stillness) and Alex Pauk (Mirage). For its visionary support of this venture, Suncor Inc. received a Financial Post award for innovative funding in the arts.

The Esprit Orchestra's 1985 activities consisted of a three concert tour in December to Quebec City and Montreal. The third concert in Montreal included premieres of new works by winning contestants in the 1985 Young Composers Competition sponsored by Les Événements de Neuf.

Early in 1986 the orchestra developed a permanent core of musicians and expanded its operations to produce its first concert series in Toronto. This series included the premiere of Elephant in the Dark, a commissioned work by Montreal composer José Evangelista. The orchestra's New World Series during the 1986-87 season features music by American and Canadian composers, including the premieres of three commissioned works by Canadian composers Peter Paul Koprowski, Tomas Dusatko and Ka Nin Chan.

ALEX PAUK

Alex Pauk has been a leading exponent of new music in Canada since 1971. After graduating from the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music, he spent two years as a participant in the Ontario Arts Council's Conductor's Workshop, then proceeded to Tokyo for further studies at the Toho Gakuen School of Music.

Both as a composer and a conductor he has been deeply involved with bringing new music into being. In his role as a founding member of such groups as Array, and Days, Months, and Years to Come, he developed the skills and philosophy which led to his starting The Esprit Orchestra as a primary force in the presentation of new Canadian music for orchestra.

In June of 1986 he conducted the National Arts Centre Orchestra in a programme of Canadian music as part of the Now Series in Ottawa, and in October he was artistic director and conductor of the Satori Festival in Winnipeg.

Pauk's own orchestral compositions have been widely performed. He has written music in many genres including concert music, film scores, radiophonic montages and music theatre. Through his world-wide travels he not only brings diverse influences to his own creations, but he is also able to search out music by foreign composers for presentation to Canadian audiences. At present Pauk lives in his native city, Toronto, and freelances as a composer and conductor when not engaged in the activities of The Esprit Orchestra. He is currently President of the Canadian League of Composers.

DOUGLAS STEWART

Douglas Stewart was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1949. He began studying the flute at the age of 13 with Albert Horch, and was playing in the Winnipeg Symphony and the CBC Winnipeg Orchestra at the age of 15. After four years with these orchestras, Douglas went to Toronto on a full scholarship to the University of Toronto where he studied with Robert Aitken and Nicholas Fiore. He has also studied with Marcel Moyse, and Jean-Pierre Rampal, and received Canada Council grants for further studies with James Galway in Berlin, and Julius Baker in New York.

In 1973, Douglas won first prize in the CBC Talent Competition. Mr. Stewart's very active career over the past several years has included two years as first flute with the CJRT Orchestra in Toronto, and many appearances as soloist with various Canadian orchestras. As well, he has given numerous solo recitals, many of them broadcast on CBC Radio. As flutist with the internationally-acclaimed wind quintet, the York Winds, for the past ten years, Mr. Stewart has performed throughout Canada, in the U.S., and has toured extensively in Europe and the Middle East. He is also a highly sought after teacher and clinician, on staff at the University of Toronto, and at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. He has taught for the past three summers with Robert Aitken at Mr. Aitken's flute class at Shawnigan Lake, British Columbia.

Mr. Stewart has recorded on ERA Records, Centrediscs, and Melbourne Records. Recently he recorded the Fourth Brandenburg Concerto for CBC Records along with Robert Aitken, and with Mario Bernardi conducting.

Alex PAUK (b. 1945)

Mirage

Alex Pauk was born and educated in Toronto and undertook further studies in conducting in Japan. He then settled in Vancouver where he was involved in various new music activities. In 1974 he began a ten year association with the National Youth Orchestra as conductor and composer. When he returned home to Toronto in 1979 he concentrated on composition full time, for concerts and film. Since the founding of The Esprit Orchestra in 1983 he has once again undertaken a busy conducting schedule but still finds time to devote to composition.

Some of Pauk's recent works include Mirage, premiered by The Esprit Orchestra in 1984, Echo, Spirit, Isle which was premiered by the Quebec Symphony Orchestra, and Water from the Moon, a trio for violin, clarinet and piano commissioned by the Da Camera Ensemble and premiered by that group in 1986. Two recent works of a somewhat more unusual nature are Nomad, a sound montage created especially for radio, and Seventh Aura, a string quintet written for the Raad electronic string instruments and premiered in December 1986 by the Armin Electric Strings.

Pauk writes as follows about tonight's featured work, Mirage: "This orchestral work is one in a series of my pieces dealing with the intangible and reveals my continuing interest in using non-Western and non-'modern' elements in my music. Mirage can be regarded as a kind of aural terrain with fleeting glimpses of music from Asia Minor and Eastern Europe creating musical layers. The mirage in this case is represented by the 'suspended' music in the middle of the piece and has components suggesting a phantasm from some distant, imagined and exotic culture. Throughout the piece there is a continual crossing and re-crossing of tentative musical borders in the manner of the nomads whose music inspired this composition."

Sunday March 8 at 8:00 pm

the *esprit* orchestra

Alex Pauk
conductor

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R. Murray Schafer was born in Sarnia and raised and educated in Toronto. Until the age of 18 he hoped to become an artist, and this aspect of his creativity has found an outlet in the graphic notation and designs in many of his scores and books. However music became the focus of his studies at the University of Toronto in the early 1950s. Following his famous eviction from the U of T Schafer spent a number of years studying and travelling in Europe where he met, among others, Ezra Pound, whose writings on music Schafer edited in the book Ezra Pound and Music, published in 1977.

In 1961 he returned to Canada and after brief periods in Toronto and St. John's, Newfoundland, Schafer moved to British Columbia. From 1965 to 1975 he was director of the World Soundscape Project at Simon Fraser University and his investigations in this field led to his brilliant 1977 book The Tuning of the World. In 1975 he moved back to Ontario to devote more time to composition. It is not possible in a short note to do justice to the wide scope and range of Schafer's interests and achievements, but the reader is encouraged to refer to the excellent biography of Schafer by Stephen Adams published in 1983.

Schafer's Flute Concerto, unlike some of his other orchestral compositions, is not satirical in intent. It is only the second concerto by Schafer and was written exactly thirty years after his first, the Concerto for Harpsichord and Eight Wind Instruments of 1954. The Flute Concerto was written for flutist Robert Aitken and premiered by him with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra under Charles Dutoit on October 8th, 1984.

The concerto is in the conventional three movement fast-slow-fast form. The writing for flute includes such contemporary techniques as whistle tones, tongue rams, key clicks and multiphonics. The composer notes in the score that in the first movement the soloist should give the impression of "rushed frenzy which never abates until the end of the movement." The orchestral accompaniment to this flute perpetuum mobile begins with short, sharp, punctuating chords and gradually builds to a mighty climax. At this point the flute introduces a soaring theme which ends the first movement and then is taken up and transformed by the orchestra at the beginning of the second movement. The expressive writing for the soloist in the slow movement uses microtonal pitch inflections in imitation of oriental music. The last movement is in three sections, the outer two fast and in 5/16 metre. A tuba cadenza introduces the slow middle section, which is in part based on material from the second movement. Near the end of the work there is a short ad libitum cadenza for the soloist.

Tomas DUSATKO (b. 1952)

Traces of Becoming

Tomas Dusatko was born in Toronto and studied classical guitar and composition at the University of Toronto Faculty of Music, where he received the B.Mus. degree in 1975 and and the M.Mus. degree in 1976. He was a finalist in the CBC National Radio Competition for Young Composers in 1977 and has won numerous scholarships and awards. He currently teaches music at St. Michael's Choir School in Toronto. Dusatko has written music on commission for the CBC, Array, the U of T Faculty of Music and violist Rivka Golani among others.

In a 1982 interview Dusatko named the composers Ligeti and Varèse as two of the strongest influences on his music while, at the other end of the historical spectrum, he remarked that the study of ancient Greek music theory was another source of inspiration. Diastema for accordion, viola and percussion and Achordos for large wind, brass and percussion ensemble, both written in 1980, are two works that reflect the composer's interest in the music of ancient Greece. His Melos series of compositions for different solo instruments consists of three works to date, Melos I for oboe (1975), Melos II for cello (1978) and Melos III for viola (1983). More recently Gentle Madness (1986), a hauntingly beautiful work for soprano, synthesizer and piano, was premiered and broadcast on the CBC.

The composer has kindly provided the following note for tonight's premiere performance of Traces of Becoming:

"After several frustrating, unsuccessful attempts throughout the year to produce a work for Esprit, a conversation with Alex Pauk convinced me to use this work as the first step in a new direction, rather than a culmination of past ideas. In this brief orchestral study ideas are continually striving to become fully formed, emerging and transforming themselves, seeking their inevitable unfolding - in a very real sense, mirroring my own artistic efforts to break through. Possibly, in this work there are traces of as yet unformed ideas and partially realized new directions. My thanks to Alex for his encouragement and faith."



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STEVE REICH

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Further information from the Promotion Department

Steve REICH (b. 1936)

Variations for Winds, Strings and Keyboards

Steve Reich was born in New York and began to study drumming at the age of 14. He earned a degree in philosophy from Cornell University in 1957 and went on to do studies in composition at Juilliard and at Mills College in California where he received his M.A. in music in 1963. Reich has been interested in the music of non-Western cultures since his student days, and he has studied the music of three particular ethnic traditions in depth: African drumming during the summer of 1970 in Ghana, Balinese Gamelan music during the summers of 1972 and 1973 with Balinese teachers in America, and Hebrew cantillation in 1976-77 in New York and Jerusalem. Hypnotically repetitive rhythms are a feature of the first two of these ethnic traditions, as they are also of Reich's compositions, and his study of Jewish chant has also left its mark on his recent music, particularly in *Iehillim* ("Psalms") of 1981 for women's voices and orchestra.

John Adams has recently written about Reich that he was "once a fringe figure of the avant garde, playing in museums and loft concerts in New York's Soho district," but that he has since become "one of the most imitated composers of the latter half of the 20th-century, whose style has had a discernible effect on the development of rock as well as serious music". Much of Reich's music was written for performance by his own ensemble, "Steve Reich and Musicians", which was begun in 1966 with just three performers but now includes up to 40 players or more as required. Such works as he has written for larger orchestral forces usually also exist in a smaller chamber version for performance by his own ensemble.

Variations for Winds, Strings and Keyboards was Reich's first mature work that was not written specifically for his own ensemble, although it does also exist in a chamber version that was premiered by Reich's group in New York three months before the San Francisco Symphony gave the premiere of the orchestral version. It was composed in December 1979 and is dedicated to Betty Freeman, the noted art and music patron and long time supporter of Reich. The work consists of three statements of a single long drawn out descending harmonic progression, with each variation becoming ever more complex. Joan La Barbara, in reviewing the premiere of the work, wrote as follows: "There is a new quality of peacefulness to the music. It is certainly forward in movement but without the driving, almost relentless intensity of earlier works...[it] is rich in timbre, slightly oriental in flavour, melodically alive, in a constant state of motion while giving an overall feeling of peace and rest. It is a beautiful work."

Programme notes by Robin Elliott

the

esprit

orchestra

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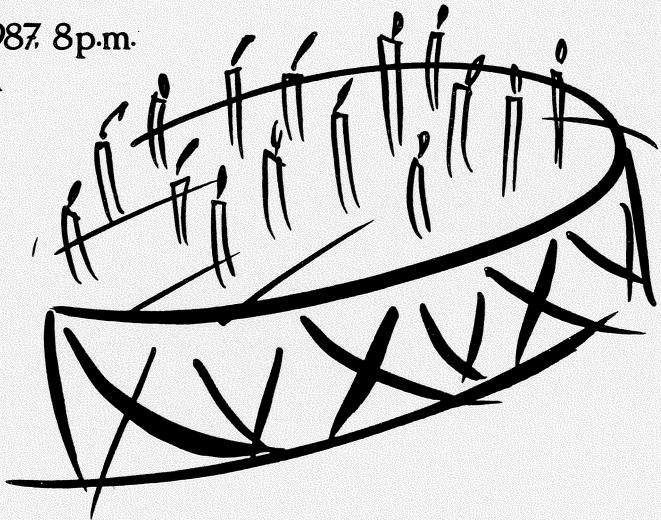
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